

5. (amended)

A2
The method according to claim 1 wherein the material is transparent to radiation emitted by the laser [wavelength] and the pulse width is 10 to 10,000 femtoseconds, the beam has an energy of 10 nanojoules to 1 millijoule.

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

7. (amended)

A3
The method according to claim 1 wherein the [predetermined] characteristic pulse width is obtained by [measuring] determining the ablation (LIB) threshold of the material as a function of pulse width and determining where the ablation (LIB) threshold function is no longer proportional to [scales as] the square root of pulse width.

Please amend claims 13 and 14 as follows:

13. (amended)

A4
The method according to claim 1 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical] changes caused by ionization, free electron multiplication, dielectric breakdown, plasma formation, and/or vaporization.

14. (amended)

The method according to claim 1 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical breakdown] plasma formation.

Please amend claims 21 and 29 and correct grammatical/syntactical errors therein as follows:

In claim 21 in the second line of subpart (a) before the word "in" please delete the words "comprising a sequence of pulses"; and in the first line of subpart (b) after the word "focusing" please insert -- said one or more pulses of --.

In claim 29 in the second line of subpart (c) after the word "said" please delete "beam comprising a sequence of"; and in the first line of subpart (d) after the word "focusing" please insert -- said one or more pulses of --.

Please amend claims 24 and 25 as follows:

24. (amended) 24
The method according to claim 21 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical] changes caused by ionization, free electron multiplication, dielectric breakdown, plasma formation, and/or vaporization.

25. (amended) 25
The method according to claim 21 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical breakdown] plasma formation.

Please amend claims 32 and 33 as follows:

32. (amended) 32
The method according to claim 29 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical] changes caused by ionization, free electron multiplication, dielectric breakdown, plasma formation, and/or vaporization.

33. (amended) 33
The method according to claim 29 wherein the breakdown includes [chemical and physical breakdown] plasma formation.

In claim 37, the second line there f, before the numeral "29", please delete "and" and place in its stead -- or --.

Please add new claim 40 which is similar to the combination of claims 1 and 7.

36p.

A method for laser induced breakdown (LIB) of a material with a pulsed laser beam, the material being characterized by a relationship of fluence breakdown threshold versus laser pulse width that exhibits a distinct change in slope at a characteristic laser pulse width, said method comprising the steps of:

- a. generating a beam of one or more laser pulses in which each pulse has a pulse width equal to or less than said characteristic laser pulse width, said characteristic pulse width being defined by the ablation (LIB) threshold of the material as a function of pulse width where the ablation (LIB) threshold function is no longer proportional to the square root of pulse width; and
- b. focusing said beam to a point at or beneath the surface of the material.

In the Drawings:

Please substitute the attached Figures 1 through 13B, which are identical to Figures 1 through 13B as filed except for corrections required by the Official Draftsman. Original Figures 1 through 13B were objected to by the Official Draftsman on the basis of nonconforming margins; and lines, numbers, and letters not being uniformly thick.